



Mount Olive
Lutheran Church and School

Living Under Grace
Romans 6:3-14
Week of
October 21, 2018



For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. Romans 6:14

These powerful and significant words penned by the Apostle Paul say volumes about who we are and why we are here. They cap the topic of what it means to be a baptized child of God and outline the certainty that we have as His children by grace alone through faith alone, and that that in Christ Jesus ALONE. This broader section acknowledges the challenges we all face being both “*saint and sinner*” and gives us the tools whereby we can “walk in newness of life.”

Still a slave to your sinful nature? Is the devil, sin, and the thread of death still causing you to be a “*paralyzed Christian,*” fearful that any move might invoke the condemnation of God should we fail or fall short of expectations (mostly our own)? To deal with this concern Paul focuses us on the love of Christ and the work of Christ. What did He do that frees us from the threat and fear of death, that frees us from the slavery that sin imposes on the rest of mankind? The answers are all seen in this explanation of what Jesus did and what His life, atoning death, and resurrection means for us. “*For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all...*” (and by being a part of His death through our baptism) these words apply to us as well as we see later in the text, “*...but the life that He lives, He lives to God.*” V. 10

The point is well made for you who know the love of God in Christ, “*Therefore do not let sin...*” (implying that we are allowing it to do this in the first place as God’s children) “*...reign in your mortal body.*” And to finish this thought Paul states clearly, “*For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace*” (v. 14).

All of this brings us to the point of why he thus exhorts the Christians in Rome. He expresses our Lord’s desire that we *not be instruments of unrighteousness to sin*. But rather that we present ourselves, meaning a true act of sacrifice, of worship, to God *as instruments of righteousness*.

Let’s pray together: Dear heavenly Father, our sins are a grievous foe which we should hate as long as we live. Ever send your Holy Spirit to return us daily to our baptisms for in our baptism we are washed and made clean in Christ. Grant that we may daily put off sin that a new person created in us by grace, may arise and serve you as an instrument of righteousness, through Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.



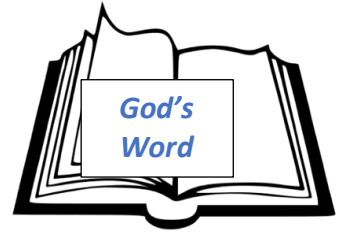
CONNECT to Each Other

Take a few moments to greet each other—if new or unfamiliar to the people in your group, introduce yourselves. It is helpful to others if you give an interesting factoid about yourself that not many people know about.

- 1) Have you ever hesitated to get involved in the church, or even some other organization, because you were afraid what people might think of you? Has your wealth (abundance or lack thereof) ever been a factor in how you interact with the members of church? Explain.

Note: While we want to talk about our spiritual act of worship in giving, we do not want people to think that “the lack thereof” should ever deter them from acts of Christian love or service and we also need to recognize that these things take place in our individual vocations as well as in the church.

CONNECT Through the Word – Read the text from this week’s sermon found in Romans 6:3-14.



- 2) Our speaker for the sermon on Sunday was also taking time to inform people about the congregation’s planned giving program during and between services. Why do you think it was important to talk about God’s grace rather than just talking about money? Where does true Christian giving begin? (1 John 4:19 – Or the whole section [vv. 7-21] if there is time).

Note: Be familiar with the planned giving committee and the blessings that our endowment brings every year to our church. (e.g. over \$3,000 per year to general ministry already in its infancy). But more important is to keep the proper motivation for giving in mind, and that is Jesus first loved us.

CONNECT to Life

- 3) Why is the phrase “*saint and sinner*” so important to understanding the reality that we often fail to do what we should, even as Christians? Aware of our weakness, why does our sermon text (e.g. vv. 12-14) once again point us to a grace/Christ-centered motive for what we do? Read Romans 7:15 to understand what we mean when saying we are at the same time “*saint and sinner*” (Broader lesson includes vv. 13-25).
- 4) If we were to allow fear to determine what we do and do not do what might be the consequence? Discuss what a “paralyzed Christian” might be in this context.

Note: Many Christian struggle with laziness, lack of motivation and simply struggle with day-to-day Christian giving. It might be best to help them see, they are not alone in their struggles. But draw them back to the text that points them to being “instruments of righteousness” and empowered by the fact they are living under grace and not law. This leads to greater joyfulness in giving and in living for Christ. (2 Cor. 9:7).

Planned Giving Factoid: As we look at the average Christian’s actions in getting an estate plan in place to remember, to support the work of the Gospel, the average number of Christians who remember the church and the Gospel in their estate plans mirror the secular ratios of those who remember a charity. In view of this, should we be talking about this more in our midst? What do you know of your congregational planned giving committee and what is its purpose? Look for brochures and planners in the entry or at the church office or call your giving counselor, Pastor Dan Basel, for details – Office: 507-344-7311 or Cell: 507-469-9656.

Note: While we do not want this to just be an “ad for giving,” it is something we need to talk about more openly so that we can be a witness and an example in our own life in Christ. Remembering that we are under grace (undeserved love) and are encouraged by our Lord to be “instruments of righteousness” helps us to keep the right focus in talking about giving.

List a few other ways we can give, besides giving of our treasures? Once again, we remember why we can talk about these things in the first place. ***For we are not under law, but under grace.***

CONNECT to Prayer – As we close and head into the week!

- OFFER PRAYERS that we may be good stewards of what God has given us so that Gospel ministry can be carried out during as well as after our lives!
- Pray for our church and for our ministries at church: Day School, Jesus Cares (reaching out to those with special needs with Jesus), Preschool at Peace and St. Paul’s. Pray for our outreach efforts to our neighbors.
- Get to know and appreciate, and pray that the efforts of the Board for Stewardship and the planned giving committee can reach those who are able to leave gifts that will continue to support the ministries of our church and enable us to use them to God’s glory.
- Pray specifically for _____ or others from church and beyond our church that need our prayers.
- Pray for the victims of the hurricanes this year, including our brethren at Amazing Grace Lutheran in Panama City, Florida whose church and parsonage suffered extensive damage.
- Pray for our country as we elect our leadership that they will honor God and govern according both to natural law and moral law of our Lord in representing our citizens and directing our land.
- Pray for others in our group who have requests. **Close with prayer.**